

# **SCHENEVUS CENTRAL SCHOOL VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

## **DEFINITION**

A volunteer is defined as an individual performing services for the School District who does not receive compensation for his/her services. Individuals who volunteer to perform services for the School District are not “employees” for purposes of compliance with the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). An individual is a volunteer so long as the individual is not regularly employed to perform the same services for the District and so long as the individual receives for his/her services no more than expenses, or recognition gifts. The administration of the school and the instructional program are the responsibility of the school employees and cannot be delegated. A school administrator may conduct an orientation to ensure that District rules are understood.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the volunteer program will be as follows:

- Supplement the work of classroom teachers working directly with students in a curricular, co-curricular or extra-curricular capacity, upon their request, under their supervision, and with the approval of the school administration.
- Provide individual attention for students and or athletes through tutoring, coaching, and/or small group projects under the direction of the school staff.
- Provide enrichment experiences to supplement the educational program.
- Provide assistance for the school staff in non-academic areas where student contact may or may not exist.
- Meet special school needs.
- Promote better school-community relations by enhancing community understanding.
- Develop improved public relations for local, state, and national educational endeavors.

## **SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS SHALL BE APPROVED BY THE PRINCIPAL**

- Prospective school volunteers, shall be interviewed and approved by the Principal and must complete all volunteer forms provided to the school including a volunteer enrollment form, a background investigation authorization and release. The Principal's decision on whether to approve the volunteer candidate shall be based upon the best interests of the school. A rejected volunteer applicant may appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or a designee whose decision shall be final.
- School Volunteers shall be under the supervision of a staff member.
- Volunteers work under the direction of the administration and school staff that retain the responsibility for the instruction and supervision of students in their charge. Volunteers are assigned to a staff member who is responsible for the volunteer. It is the staff member's responsibility to give the volunteer a clear understanding of the duties, procedures, expectations and any other knowledge needed for performance in the school setting.

## **HOW TO VOLUNTEER**

Individuals who are interested in volunteering in the school district are invited to contact either the Building Principal's office or the Superintendent's office for questions regarding the volunteer program, and who would help you to become a volunteer.

## **SUPERVISED ACTIVITIES AS A VOLUNTEER**

Activities will always occur under the direction and supervision of School District staff members. Items listed below are meant to give volunteers an idea of the areas where their services could be used. The list is not comprehensive and any questions about activities not listed here should be directed to the administrator:

- Activities that do not involve direct contact with students (assembling mailings, coordinating events, preparing bulletin boards, etc.)
- Assisting teachers with in-classroom activities (reading with students, tutoring individual students or small groups, helping with special projects, etc.)
- Helping with special events in the schools (carnivals, literacy events, etc.)
- Acting as a special speaker for a class or special event (speaking about career opportunities, positive choices, or safety issues, demonstrating science experiments, etc.)
- Working in areas of the school other than the classroom (checking out books in the library, acting as lab monitor, helping with coaching, etc.)

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

For the safety and security of our students, a background check will be completed by the District Administrative personnel. Information obtained in the process will be kept in the strictest confidentiality. A criminal record does not necessarily mean that a volunteer will be prevented from serving in the schools.

An individual whose criminal background check record reflects a crime that has a nexus to the type of volunteer work applied for, as determined by the district administrator or his/her designee, will be refused as a volunteer.

## **CODE OF ETHICS & CONFIDENTIALITY**

There are certain rules all of us must follow when working in the school:

- Do not discuss individual children outside the school.
- Do not compare children within the school.
- Never publicly discuss parents, children, teachers or other volunteers.
- Volunteers will be restricted from access to confidential information in student and employee files. Regular volunteers will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen or heard while working as a volunteer. While a volunteer may see

confidential records of children in the classroom, staff room or office, under no circumstances should a volunteer repeat any of this information.

- Be responsible for your scheduled times, if applicable, and notify the school staff if you are not able to meet the commitment.
- Respect the authority of the school and the school administration.
- Be impartial in all school situations.
- Do not let your personal feelings enter into your service as a volunteer.
- Dress appropriately, always remembering that you are setting an example for the students. Volunteers should plan to dress comfortably and appropriately when spending time with the students in school or during school-related activities. Clothing that advertises things like alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, violence, or sexual acts should never be worn when working with children.

## **SIGN – IN**

All visitors to the schools, including volunteers, are required to report to the office each time they visit during normal school hours. At that time, volunteers will be given a badge to wear. The badge will signify to the staff that a volunteer is in the building and to the students that there is one more caring adult available to them. If a volunteer is seen in the building without a badge, that volunteer will be asked to go immediately to the building office to check in.

## **WHAT VOLUNTEERS CANNOT DO**

- Administer Discipline - If you have concerns about anything you see in the classroom or on school grounds, speak to the teacher or School Building Administrator.
- Interrogate Students or Investigate Problems – Please report any problems to a staff member or school building administrator.
- Administer Medications – Please refer any matter to the School Nurse or building office.
- Clean Up Bodily Fluids – Volunteers should not be involved in the clean up of bodily fluids. In the case of a life- threatening situation, volunteers should first attempt to alert school personnel. If it is necessary for them to take immediate action, they should exercise all reasonable precautionary measures. School personnel should be notified as soon as possible.

## **CONCERNS IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Child Abuse/Neglect – Volunteers should report to school staff if they know or suspect a child has been abused or neglected. The school administration, child’s teacher, guidance staff or school nurse should be sought out under these circumstances.

Discipline – Volunteers should not be involved in the discipline of a student. However, volunteers should be aware that each student has a right to educational opportunities. Discipline, as administered in the Schenevus Central School in conjunction with the home, is designed to produce behavioral changes that will enable students to develop the self-discipline that is necessary to function successfully in their education and social environment. The major objective of discipline in the schools is to teach the following concepts for living:

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- Respect for the rights, dignity, and safety of all individuals within the school and community
- Respect for law and observance of school district policies, procedures and local regulations
- Respect for public and private property rights. Student behavior that unduly disrupts class work, involves substantial disorder, or invades the rights of others will not be tolerated.

## **INSURANCE**

School volunteers are included in the school's liability insurance policy. Personal items that are lost, stolen or damaged are not covered under any school insurance. Volunteers are advised to leave valuables at home or securely lock them in an assigned area of the school.

## **TRANSPORTING CHILDREN**

Volunteers should not transport students.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION**

It is the policy of the Schenevus Central School District that no person may be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extra-curricular, pupil service, recreational, or other program or activity because of the person's age, sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental emotional, or learning disability or handicap.

## **INJURIES & ACCIDENTS**

Injuries to the volunteer or others must be reported immediately to the school office. If an injured child cannot be taken to the office, send someone for help immediately. Injured children should be watched closely.

Under no circumstances should school volunteers administer medication of any kind, including over the counter drugs such as aspirin. The school personnel are responsible for this kind of aid.

## **BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS**

In the event of a life-threatening situation, please treat everyone's body fluids as being "potentially infectious" to you. Don't touch or handle. If blood/body fluids are noted, contact the Principal or custodian so proper clean up can be accomplished.